HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL CONSULTATION

TO:	Horsham District Council – Planning Dept
LOCATION:	78 Guildford Road Horsham
DESCRIPTION:	Erection of a double garage and creation of new access to the site
REFERENCE:	DC/25/0882
RECOMMENDATION:	**Holding objection / significant modification/ refusal**

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATION:

The key considerations as to the suitability of the development proposals at the site with regard to trees are the location of the proposed new double garage and the amendments to the access into the property. The application has not been supported by a tree survey, setting out which trees would need to be removed and how any trees to be retained would not be impacted by the development activity at the site.

MAIN COMMENTS:

In the area where the new garage is proposed there are a serval mature trees, which would need to be removed to allow for the scheme to be built as purposes, and if any were to be retained the works at the property would significantly compromise their key rooting area, due to the extent of development shown to the fall within their Root Protection Areas (RPAs). Para 5.3.1 of the BS States, "***The default position should be that structures (see 3.10) are located outside the RPAs of trees to be retained. However, where there is an overriding justification for construction within the RPA, technical solutions might be available that prevent damage to the tree(s)"***.

The principal tree in the area is a mature Oak, located on the southern boundary of the property, recently protected by TPO ref T1 of TPO/1591. Please note that a TPO protects every part of a tree, including its roots. Due to its roadside setting, it is very visible from several public viewpoints in the area, and to a wide range of receptors, including pedestrians and road users. As such, the tree is considered to have exceptional public visual amenity value. It contributes significantly to the character of the local streetscape due to its size, form, and prominent roadside location. It is also acknowledged that the additional trees at the front of the property are collectively of high landscape value, although not to the same extent as the Oak.

The existing off-site engineered highway to the south (Guildford Road) will have restricted any significant root development in this direction. Whereby, the impermeable surfaces to the south would, in my opinion, have discouraged major root proliferation in this area, suggesting major tree roots would be located to the north into the site, and in the soft ground area where the new garage is proposed. The tree has a stem diameter of 94cm, which gives it an RPA of 11.2m extending from its base into the site, to the north, east and west, in the area where the garage is located and under the existing site access.

Building the new garage and reconfiguring the access within RPA of the Oak tree in question, where it falls within the soft ground area at the front of the property, even with the use of technical solutions, should be avoided due to the potential for significant root damage and soil compaction to occur through the construction activities such as excavations, the installation of foundations, or the movement of heavy machinery can compact the soil, reducing oxygen and water availability, while also causing irreversible damage to the root system, particularly the fine feeder roots responsible for nutrient uptake. Such impacts could result in long-term decline or even the loss of the tree, underscoring the need to respect RPA boundaries.

To address my concerns with the proposed scheme, the existing hard surfacing where the access is would need to be retained as is, and the new garage and any new hardstanding would need to be moved to the north and maintained at a distance of no less than 9m from the base of the Oak tree in question. If the garage can't be moved to a more appropriate location, I would recommend that the application be refused.

ANY RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS: Not at this stage	
NAME:	Andy Bush Arboricultural Officer
DEPARTMENT:	Strategic Planning (Specialist Team)
DATE:	24/07/25